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Letter dated 2 January 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

The Security Council, in its resolution 2167 (2014), underscored the importance of developing effective partnerships in the area of peacekeeping between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant statutes of regional and subregional organizations. In that context, the Council requested, in paragraph 13, that I initiate, in full and close cooperation with the African Union, a lessons-learned exercise on the transitions from African Union peace operations to United Nations peacekeeping operations in Mali and in the Central African Republic, and provide specific recommendations that could be used for possible future transitional arrangements.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations led this lessons-learned exercise, which was conducted in collaboration with the United Nations Office to the African Union, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), and in consultation with the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and relevant United Nations departments, offices, agencies, funds and programmes. The methodology of the exercise included a desk review of relevant reports, including from the African Union and ECOWAS, as well as interviews with United Nations and African Union officials and other key stakeholders. On 19 November 2014, representatives from the United Nations, the African Union, regional economic communities and regional mechanisms held a consultative meeting in Cairo to discuss the findings and recommendations, which were endorsed on 12 December 2014 during a joint United Nations-African Union validation meeting at the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa.

The transitions from the African Union peace operations to United Nations peacekeeping operations in Mali and in the Central African Republic took place against the backdrop of an enhanced partnership at both the strategic and operational levels. The role of the African Union and subregional organizations over the past two decades has been critical in jointly addressing crises on the continent within the framework of Chapter VIII of the Charter. From the peacekeeping endeavours in Burundi to the Sudan and Somalia, various models of cooperation have gradually emerged between the African Union and the United Nations, anchored in the principles of complementarity and comparative advantage. Various

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processes and liaison mechanisms have been established at a number of levels to facilitate and enhance cooperation, information-sharing and consultation, including the Joint Task Force on Peace and Security and a desk-to-desk consultative meeting on the prevention and management of conflicts. The establishment of the United Nations Office to the African Union in 2010 has also contributed significantly to fostering a more dynamic partnership between the two organizations.

In response to the multidimensional crises in Mali, on 13 November 2012 the Peace and Security Council of the African Union requested the Security Council to authorize, for an initial period of one year, the planned deployment of the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA). Council resolution 2085 (2012) authorized the deployment of AFISMA and requested the establishment of a multidisciplinary United Nations presence in Mali, the United Nations Office in Mali, in order to provide coordinated and coherent support to political and security processes. Subsequently, resolution 2100 (2013) provided for the transfer of authority from AFISMA to MINUSMA on 1 July 2013. Some 6,103 military personnel, 20 individual police officers and three formed police units comprising 368 officers were rehatted from the African-led peace operation on that date.

Regarding the Central African Republic, on 19 July 2013, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union requested the Security Council to authorize the deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) for an initial period of six months. The transfer of authority from the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic, which had been operating in the country since 2003 under an ECCAS mandate, to MISCA took place on 19 December 2013. Council resolution 2127 (2013) authorized the deployment of MISCA for a period of 12 months. The transition from MISCA to MINUSCA was defined under resolution 2149 (2014), which set the date for the transfer of authority on 15 September 2014. In the same resolution, the Council also requested the immediate transformation of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA) into MINUSCA. Those transitions also brought to the fore the important role played by bilateral and multilateral partners, including the French operations Sangaris and Serval and the European Union-led peacekeeping force in the Central African Republic, in helping to address the crises.

The swift deployment of AFISMA and MISCA was critical to the international community's efforts to protect civilians in those countries. It also paved the way for a smooth transfer of authority to MINUSMA and MINUSCA. Although the contexts for cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in Mali and in the Central African Republic were distinct, a number of common lessons emerged. The present letter contains the key findings and recommendations on the strategic, operational, coordination and support arrangements required to enhance coherence and inter-operability between the two organizations.

Strategic cooperation pre- and post-transition

As the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, its relationship with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union is at the core of the overall strategic partnership between the two organizations, which has been guided by the decisions and resolutions of both Councils. The lessons learned from Mali and the Central African Republic

underscore that successful transitions from African Union peace operations to United Nations peacekeeping operations require political coherence and the harmonization of policy and strategies at the highest levels. The lessons-learned exercise also highlights the need to ensure that, to the extent possible, the mandates given by the Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union to operations supported by both organizations are developed through close consultation. They should also be written in a way that demonstrates unity of strategic vision in order to facilitate the strategic planning process and enable a more coordinated response.

A comparison between the processes leading up to the transitions in Mali and the Central African Republic shows that specific instructions from the Security Council on the conduct of joint strategic assessments and planning processes were key to ensuring a coordinated response between the United Nations, the African Union and the subregional organizations concerned. In the case of Mali, in its resolution 2085 (2012), which authorized the deployment of AFISMA, the Council requested the Secretariat to jointly assess with the African Union, ECOWAS and other partners the operational requirements for the African-led operation. In the case of the Central African Republic, strategic direction was provided by the Council in several resolutions, including resolution 2127 (2013), in which the Council requested the Secretariat to undertake, in consultation with the African Union, expeditious contingency preparations and planning for the possible transformation of MISCA into a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

The subsequent assessment missions led by my Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations in November 2013 and February 2014, with the participation of African Union and ECCAS representatives, contributed to the provision of harmonized recommendations and informed the mandate formulation process that led to the transfer of authority from MISCA to MINUSCA. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations leadership's engagement with the African Union liaison office and ambassadors from ECOWAS and ECCAS member States also helped in that regard. Notwithstanding the differences that emerged, enhanced consultations between members of the two Councils, including through the African members of the Security Council and an exchange of letters between the Chair of the African Union Commission and myself, in February 2014, also contributed to a harmonized approach to the transition process.

The transitions in Mali and the Central African Republic also indicate that an effective partnership in peacekeeping between the United Nations and the African Union has to be anchored in a clear division of labour, including beyond the date of the transfer of authority. Sustaining regional engagement and leveraging the comparative advantages of the United Nations, the African Union and regional actors to move the political process forward has proven critical in the search for lasting peace and stability in both Mali and the Central African Republic. The Support and Follow-Up Group on the Situation in Mali and the International Contact Group on the Central African Republic have served as effective instruments in strengthening coordination among members of the international community and national stakeholders in support of the peace process. They have also helped to create an enabling environment for the implementation of the mandates of MINUSMA and MINUSCA.

As indicated in my report of 3 March 2014 on the Central African Republic submitted pursuant to paragraph 48 of Security Council resolution 2127 (2013) (S/2014/142), a United Nations peacekeeping operation can only succeed when the region plays an important and complementary role. In that regard, and in order to enhance regional engagement in the Central African Republic, in its resolution 2149 (2014) the Security Council requested MINUSCA, within its existing resources and mandate, to assist the political efforts of the African Union and ECCAS in support of the transition process, following the transfer of authority on 15 September 2014. The establishment of strong, post-transition African Union missions, such as the African Union Mission for Mali and the Sahel and the African Union Mission for the Central African Republic and Central Africa, contributed to sustaining regional engagement and maintaining coherence and unity of vision at the strategic level. In the long term, it could also contribute to facilitating United Nations exit strategies.

Lessons learned from the experiences in Mali and the Central African Republic point to the need for greater clarity on the timelines and conditions under which transitions takes place in order to increase their predictability. An early indication from the Security Council, as was the case in its resolution 2127 (2013) on the Central African Republic, of its intention to eventually transform an African-led peace operation into a United Nations peacekeeping operation, in coordination with relevant regional entities and the host nation, can facilitate the early strategic engagement of both secretariats. Such an indication can also facilitate the development of mission concepts and benchmarks that can contribute to a smoother handover process.

Operational planning and coordination

The process leading up to the transfer of authority from MISCA to MINUSCA benefited from lessons drawn from the transition from AFISMA to MINUSMA. In the case of Mali, the United Nations enhanced its support for the planning process of AFISMA in line with resolution 2071 (2012), in which the Security Council requested the Secretariat to deploy military and security planners to assist ECOWAS and the African Union in planning for AFISMA. However, those efforts were hampered in part by the fact that, at that time, both ECOWAS and the African Union had started to develop distinct concepts of operations.

Formal planning only started following the 19 October 2012 meeting of the Support and Follow-Up Group on the Situation in Mali, which endorsed the African Union-led Strategic Concept for the Resolution of the Crises in Mali. Subsequently, the African Union and ECOWAS held a series of meetings with the support of the United Nations and other partners to harmonize the concept of operations of AFISMA. The concept of operations was eventually endorsed by the extraordinary summit of ECOWAS held on 11 November and by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on 13 November. Building on the momentum generated by the adoption of the strategic concept, regular consultations were held at senior levels between the United Nations, the African Union and ECOWAS headquarters to coordinate operational support to AFISMA, including within the framework of an integrated task force.

Meanwhile, in the Central African Republic, the United Nations worked from the outset to support the transition of authority from the ECCAS-led operation, the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic, to the

African-led operation MISCA, which took place on 19 December 2013. The United Nations also participated in the African Union-led assessment missions as early as April 2013, in support of the development of the MISCA concept of operations. As called for in Security Council resolution 2127 (2013), the Secretariat provided technical and expert advice to support the planning and deployment of MISCA and strengthen its command and control, administrative infrastructure and training capacity, including through the mobile training team model designed and delivered in a coordinated fashion by the United Nations and the African Union.

Following the adoption of Security Council resolution 2149 (2014), the African Union and the United Nations developed a transition plan focusing on key strategic and operational measures to be implemented. The United Nations MISCA support team, which deployed to the Central African Republic in February 2014, played an important role in operationalizing the transition plan and linking operational planning with donor support planning in Addis Ababa and New York. The support team also served as the nucleus of the transition team recommended in my report of 3 March 2014. The deployment of the transition team, which was tasked with planning the establishment of MINUSCA and preparing for the transfer of authority, with the participation of MISCA and BINUCA, contributed greatly to a smoother transition.

Command and control

Clear command and control structures are critical to the success of peacekeeping operations, particularly as they operate in volatile political and security environments. They are very important in transitions when operations are undertaken in coordination with another organization. The need for clear strategic and operational guidance is vitally important. The transitions in Mali and the Central African Republic re-emphasized that complex multinational peace operations require a clear and effective command and control framework. In both contexts, the African Union encountered challenges due to the lack of means of communication between force headquarters and sector headquarters, as well as a lack of clarity on reporting procedures.

In Mali, the relatively short transition time frame affected command and control structures in part by triggering the dissolution of the Joint Operations Centre of AFISMA. That challenge was better managed in the Central African Republic through the establishment of a common Joint Operations Centre between the African Union and the United Nations ahead of the transfer of authority. In addition, continuity in command and control was facilitated by the rehatting of the Force Commander of MISCA following a competitive recruitment process, as well as some of the staff officers and several civilian staff members of MISCA. Despite initial challenges regarding the establishment of communications infrastructure, coordination between MISCA, Operation Sangaris and the European Union-led peacekeeping force in the Central African Republic was facilitated by the integrity of the command within the respective forces and the clarity of their respective mandates, a lesson that should be taken into account when planning joint endeavours in the future. The effective and continued direction provided by the leadership of BINUCA/MINUSCA and MISCA throughout the transition was also instrumental.

Rehatting modalities

The rehatting of police and force contingents operating under African-led peace operations is a central element of the operational planning process during transitions. In the cases of Mali and the Central African Republic, the Security Council, in its resolutions 2100 (2013) and 2149 (2014), requested the United Nations to absorb as many military and police personnel as possible from the African-led peace operations into the United Nations peacekeeping mission, in accordance with United Nations standards and in coordination with ECOWAS and ECCAS. In March 2013, the Secretariat conducted an assessment to identify critical shortfalls among AFISMA troops. Efforts were also undertaken to bring troop levels in line with operational requirements, enhance awareness of United Nations peacekeeping mandates and upgrade equipment and self-sustainment capabilities. In the case of the Central African Republic, a capability assessment was conducted jointly with the African Union and ECCAS in May 2014. Shortfalls were then communicated to concerned troop- and police-contributing countries and to bilateral donors in an effort to raise their capacities prior to the transition.

Despite those efforts, which included the provision of grace periods and other measures aimed at strengthening and aligning the missions' command and control structures and harmonizing doctrines and policies, most of the contingents that MINUSMA and MINUSCA inherited on the date of their respective transfers of authority had equipment and self-sustainment capabilities that remained below United Nations standards. The transitions in Mali and the Central African Republic, therefore, highlight the need for increased collaboration on force generation between the African Union and the United Nations at an early stage, including through joint predeployment visits in order to facilitate the rehatting process. The challenges related to troop standards underscore the need for continued support for broader efforts to build the capacity of African contingents, including through support from bilateral partners.

Challenges also arose in both countries with regard to the implementation of the United Nations human rights screening policy, owing to concerns about the human rights record of some contingents to be rehatted, including contingents belonging to national forces listed in the annexes of my annual report on children and armed conflict. The human rights screening policy requires the United Nations to ensure that it does not deploy for service any person who has been involved in violations of international human rights or humanitarian law. As far as AFISMA and MISCA were concerned, the application of the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces revealed several factors and risks that the Organization was compelled to take into consideration ahead of the rehatting process in the Central African Republic. Those concerns were only partially addressed by putting in place mitigation measures, including training and additional proactive screening of MISCA contingents in the case of the Central African Republic. In future, timely coordination on and implementation of the human rights screening policy at the earliest stages of the African Union-United Nations transition planning would enhance compliance with human rights standards.

Civilian capacities

The transitions in Mali and the Central African Republic also have implications for the coordination and implementation of specific civilian-related

mandated tasks, principally human rights and the protection of civilians. There are also issues related to coordination with the humanitarian community. In both countries, the African Union deployed multidisciplinary civilian capabilities to support the military and police components and enhance the capacity of AFISMA and MISCA to deliver on their protection of civilians mandate and coordinate with other stakeholders. However, the lessons learned from both transitions suggest that the work and expertise of the African Union in the area of human rights could be further harnessed. There is also a need for greater harmonization between African Union and United Nations standards and working methods, particularly when it comes to monitoring, reporting and following up on human rights violations. There were improvements in the case of the Central African Republic, owing to, notably, the establishment of coordination mechanisms. However, the African Union and the United Nations need to improve their common understanding of the protection of civilians. The work of both organizations in that area would also benefit from more systematic coordination, combined with enhanced civilian capacity to implement strategies related to the protection of civilians.

Support arrangements

An operationally robust African Union peace support operation that can seamlessly integrate, at the operational level, into a United Nations peacekeeping operation is critical to a successful transition. In that regard, the ability to secure adequate support is a major constraint facing the African Union in the conduct of its peace operations. The Security Council has repeatedly emphasized, including most recently in resolution 2167 (2014), the need to enhance the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of financing for regional organizations when they undertake peacekeeping operations under a United Nations mandate. In the same resolution, the Council also recalled the responsibility of regional organizations to secure resources for their activities, including through contributions by their member States and support from partners.

The Security Council requested in resolutions 2085 (2012) and 2127 (2013) that I provide a package of "soft" support to AFISMA and MISCA, respectively. Given the lack of available personnel, both AFISMA and MISCA required additional support staff and civilian personnel during their start-up phases. In accordance with resolution 2127 (2013), the deployment of United Nations experts to support MISCA provided additional technical surge capacity to the African Union mission, including in the areas of mission support, communications and military and police planning. Meanwhile, in its resolution 2149 (2014), the Council authorized the deployment of military enablers to MINUSCA before the transfer of authority on 15 September 2014, including to help stand up the military and police components of MINUSCA.

In its resolutions 2085 (2012) and 2127 (2013), the Security Council requested that I establish trust funds to support AFISMA and MISCA operations, in compliance with the human rights due diligence policy, in order to supplement the resource mobilization efforts of the African Union. As a result, the trust funds established for AFISMA and MISCA received $44 million and $5 million, respectively. The trust fund established for the Central African Republic enabled the delivery of a communications package to MISCA. Disagreements persisted, however, over the condition of some equipment and led to a delay in its installation. In Mali, the trust fund was initially intended to address some of the needs identified

for AFISMA through the acquisition of critical equipment from the United Nations strategic deployment stocks.

The terms of reference of the AFISMA trust funds, established separately by the African Union and the United Nations, allowed for the full range of logistical support to be covered, including food, fuel and strategic lift, as well as reimbursement of contingent-owned equipment. However, in the case of the United Nations-managed trust fund, the relatively limited amount of funds available, coupled with the uncertainty regarding the sustainability of the trust fund mechanisms, shifted the focus towards one-time acquisition of equipment instead of direct operational support. Most of the pledges made by donors were generally earmarked for non-lethal assistance, and therefore precluded the African Union from using them to reimburse contingent-owned equipment. That was the case for 98 per cent of the support pledged at the donor conference for MISCA held by the African Union on 1 February 2014 in Addis Ababa. The African Union also had to contend with the low rate of disbursement of the pledges made by partners in Addis Ababa.

The lessons learned from the transitions in Mali and the Central African Republic demonstrate that the planning for AFISMA and MISCA, in terms of troop strength and capabilities, was influenced predominantly by the estimated availability of voluntary contributions rather than the actual needs on the ground. That was, however, partially offset in both cases by the use of already established, bilateral and multilateral African Union-managed reserve funds for African-led peace support operations. In response to the requests made by the Security Council in resolutions 2085 (2012) and 2127 (2013) for Member States and partners to provide financial support and contributions in kind to AFISMA and MISCA to enable their deployment, some Member States, particularly France and the United States of America, provided significant non-lethal and lethal support directly to a number of troop- and police-contributing countries. The provision of weapons and vehicles by France and strategic lift and other support by the United States were essential for the deployment of additional MISCA contingents. Notwithstanding those measures, however, some of the bilateral support to troop- and police-contributing countries was delivered only after the transfer of authority from MISCA to MINUSCA.

Conclusions and recommendations

The specific circumstances of each conflict should determine the particular model of collaboration between the African Union and the United Nations. It is important, however, to continue to improve the manner in which the two organizations, as well as the regional economic communities, collaborate to prevent and manage conflicts. In that context, the issue of subsidiarity between the African Union and its subregional organizations needs to be addressed with renewed vigour, within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture, as partnerships work best when there are common strategic objectives, political coherence and a clear division of responsibilities. It is equally important that efforts be pursued to enhance cooperation between the secretariats of the two organizations. That should include the strengthening of existing mechanisms such as the Joint Task Force on Peace and Security of the United Nations and African Union.

The Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union have significant roles to play in setting the strategic direction for collaboration,

particularly in the context of a possible transition. It is therefore recommended that the two Councils continue their constructive efforts to strengthen consultation and information-sharing regarding countries on their respective agendas. That is important at all times, but it is particularly important during the process of mandating and deploying African Union-led peace operations. In that regard, I am encouraged that the Security Council, in accordance with its presidential statement of 16 December 2014 (S/PRST/2014/27), intends to hold timely consultations and conduct collaborative field missions with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, as appropriate, to formulate cohesive positions and strategies on a case-by-case basis in dealing with conflict situations in Africa.

The transitions in Mali and the Central African Republic highlight the importance of early engagement by the two organizations in joint assessments and planning from the outset, taking into account the political and security dimensions of the conflicts concerned. Such planning should allow the United Nations and the African Union to develop a common vision, resulting in increased efficiency and more cost-effective mission support plans and doctrines. When the transition from an African Union operation to a United Nations peacekeeping mission is envisaged, an early indication that that is the intended course of action would improve planning during the period.

To ensure greater predictability, the two organizations should identify context-specific benchmarks that could be used to determine the conditions under which a transition should take place, given the needs in the country and the situation on the ground. The benchmarks should also take into account the time required to set up support arrangements for an African Union-led peace operation and the lead time needed to deploy a United Nations peacekeeping mission.

The transitions in Mali and the Central African Republic also confirmed that continued regional engagement remains vital to furthering stabilization efforts and sustaining political momentum. Future planning for transitions should therefore take into consideration the role of post-transition, African Union-led presences and mechanisms. It should also assess the support that the United Nations would be able to continue providing to sustain such multidimensional presences. In that regard, I again take note of the Security Council presidential statement of 16 December 2014, in which it stressed the importance of supporting the political role of the African Union during transitions, as well as in the formulation and implementation of governance and other reforms to be carried out in addressing the root causes of conflict in Africa.

Where rehatting of personnel from African Union to United Nations peace operations is envisaged, it is important for the two organizations to collaborate from the outset on force and police generation. They should consult closely with troop- and police-contributing countries about the required capabilities and their compliance with United Nations policy and doctrine, particularly with respect to human rights. It should be envisaged within the broader context of the support of the United Nations for the operationalization of the African Standby Force, whose deployment in Mali and the Central African Republic has opened up new avenues for cooperation.

Early joint planning and coordination should also apply to the transition of civilian capacity, including with respect to the human rights and protection of civilians mandates of the peace operations concerned. In that regard, the African

Union could consider developing an institutional framework for deploying human rights personnel to peace operations. The United Nations could provide support for the development of relevant policies, methodologies and planning processes. In addition, increased coordination and understanding of the two organizations' respective protection of civilians mandates and the strengthening of civilian capacity would be critical to ensuring the effective delivery of those mandates.

Predictable and sustainable support remains critical to the success of transitions from African Union peace operations to United Nations peacekeeping operations. It should continue to be led by regional organizations who should secure resources from their member States and partners. However, experiences in Mali and the Central African Republic have also confirmed that no support modality is sufficient on its own. The predictability and sustainability of funding is even more important in the context of peace enforcement operations. In that regard, there is a need to pursue efforts to optimize the full range of support modalities, including for the timely operationalization of the African Standby Force, which can be done through a combination of voluntary, assessed and bilateral support, as appropriate. Pre-approved modalities for the use of trust funds and the establishment by the African Union of pre-approved standing contracts with service providers could also be envisaged. That would help shorten timelines for the operationalization of support and enhance the management by the African Union of extrabudgetary support packages provided by partners, such as the European Union-supported African Peace Facility. In that regard, I welcome the report of the High-level Panel on Alternative Sources of Financing the African Union, under the chairmanship of the former President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo.

The African Union and the United Nations, in consultation with other partners, should conduct a lessons-learned exercise to review and assess the various mechanisms available to improve the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of financing African Union peace operations authorized by the Security Council. In addition, as was done in the Central African Republic, the Council could consider authorizing "soft" logistical support packages or technical support teams, as appropriate. The early deployment of United Nations expertise and military enablers, including engineering assets and tactical lift capabilities, could also be considered. The provision of additional United Nations technical and planning advisory capacity and other bilateral assistance would enhance the capacity and effectiveness of African Union operations and facilitate a seamless transfer of authority. Where a transfer of authority is envisioned between the two organizations, the early deployment of a joint transition team would also be important for the effective implementation of the transition plan.

I remain committed to ensuring closer interaction between both secretariats and strengthening the existing mechanisms that guide their collaboration. That would facilitate future transition processes, including with respect to decision-making and tasking. To ensure a more coherent framework for global peacekeeping, the United Nations is committed to working with the African Union to develop a creative and flexible transition toolbox embodying a common vision that the United Nations and African Union would employ, when and where appropriate, to inform future transition processes. The toolbox would include guidance and standards on (a) joint assessments and planning; (b) predeployment visits and force generation; (c) coordination mechanisms; (d) continuity in command and control, as well as

rehatting; (e) transfer of civilian capacity; (f) support mechanisms; and (g) arrangements to increase troop standards.

In that regard, as requested by the Security Council in its presidential statement of 16 December 2014, I intend to present a report on ways to further strengthen the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union on issues of peace and security in Africa, including the work of the United Nations Office to the African Union, in 2016. The outcome of the lessons-learned exercise also has implications for cooperation between the United Nations regional organizations more broadly, including the critical role played by bilateral partners during transitions. I intend to explore those further in my report on the partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations in peacekeeping, to be issued by 31 March 2015, as requested by the Council in resolution 2167 (2014).

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon